



## **Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman Wraps-Up the Month of December**

For good reason, there is excitement about the New Year, and the opportunities this year will bring to Hoosiers. But before we move forward, there were too many good things that happened last month that shouldn't go without recognition.

December was cause for a lot of celebration that included 33 Indiana communities receiving Community Focus Fund grants, more than 35,000 holiday cards were sent to servicemen and women through Hoosier Cheer for Our Heroes and a \$6.75 million grant for New Albany.

**Communities Make Improvements with a Grant from the State**  
**Our Nation's Heroes Get Much Needed Cheer from Hoosiers**  
**NAWBO Names the Woman Business Owner of the Year**  
**New Albany Receives \$6.75 Million Grant to Revitalize a Local Neighborhood**  
**Legislators Go to Work Early to Jumpstart the 2010 Legislative Session**

### **Communities Make Improvements with a Grant from the State**

Indiana cannot become a state of haves and have-nots. That's why the Community Focus Fund (CFF) grants are important to Indiana's small towns and rural communities. I awarded 33 communities CFF grants through the federal Community Development Block Grants. In total these communities received \$15 million to help with infrastructure improvements, downtown revitalization, libraries and fire services. To find if your community received a CFF grant and to learn more about this grant program, visit [www.ocra.in.gov](http://www.ocra.in.gov).

### **Our Nation's Heroes Get Much Needed Cheer from Hoosiers**

The holiday season was a little bit brighter for our servicemen and women, thanks to the Hoosier Cheer for Our Heroes letter writing campaign. More than 35,000 cards and letters – some homemade, some store bought, but all had wishes of Hoosier Cheer for our Heroes – were sent to servicemen and women overseas and to bases here in Indiana over the holiday season.

It took thousands of Hoosiers to make Hoosier Cheer for our Heroes a big success. Cards and letters came from across Indiana— from veterans to school children, church members to office workers. It also took literally an army to get more than 35,000 cards distributed. Thank you to the Indiana National Guard, the Disabled American Veterans and my staff for their support of the Hoosier Cheer for Our Heroes letter writing program.



***Lt. Gov. Skillman is joined by Gen. Umbarger to announce that more than 35,000 cards have been sent to servicemen and women through Hoosier Cheer for our Heroes letter writing campaign.***

### **NAWBO Names the Woman Business Owner of the Year**

It is always a pleasure to be surrounded by women who have spent their careers showing the world the meaning of success, women who are shattering the glass ceiling one deal at a time. And the women of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) here in Indiana are certainly doing this. I attended NAWBO's award presentation, and awarded one outstanding woman for her contributions to Indiana. Carol Curran of Phoenix Data Corporation was awarded the Woman Business Owner of the Year. Hard working Hoosiers, like Carol, are the reason Indiana will see a complete economic comeback.

### **New Albany Receives \$6.75 Million Grant to Revitalize a Local Neighborhood**

As I travel throughout the state, communities face varying issues, but one of the problems nearly every community struggles with is foreclosure, abandoned properties and the desire to revitalize neighborhoods. At the end of the month, I was in New Albany to announce a \$6.75 million grant that will revitalize the S. Ellen Jones Neighborhood. The city joins 23 other communities who have received funding through the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP).



***Lt. Gov. Skillman talks with State Rep. Ed Clere and Joe LaRocca, CEO of the Floyd County YMCA, at a news conference. Lt. Gov. Skillman announced that New Albany received a \$6.75 million Neighborhood Stabilization grant to provide affordable housing.***

New Albany will use the money to purchase and rehabilitate 40 housing units in disrepair and resell them to working Hoosiers. The city will also construct 10 new homes. These rehabilitation projects will breathe new life into the S. Ellen Jones Neighborhood and make it a more desirable location for local families.

The funding for this plan comes from \$83 million of federal money through the Neighborhood Stabilization Act of 2008. In April, we launched the Market Stabilization Program, which allows Hoosiers purchasing foreclosed homes to receive up to \$25,000 in assistance.

In the summer, we selected 21 communities statewide to receive \$50 million. Details of that announcement can be found at

[http://www.in.gov/portal/news\\_events/39749.htm](http://www.in.gov/portal/news_events/39749.htm). Statewide, we expect the Neighborhood Stabilization Program to affect nearly 1,400 properties and provide much needed affordable housing for Hoosiers. For more information about the New Albany project, [visit my Web site to read the news release](#).

## **Legislators Go to Work Early to Jumpstart the 2010 Legislative Session**

Legislators know the challenges ahead, and in December they got a jumpstart to the 2010 legislative session by holding hearings, including one issue that allows a constitutional amendment to cap property taxes. The issue will now be heard by the full legislature.

We know Hoosiers want protection from rising taxes. A public opinion survey, released last month from Ball State University, said Hoosiers want a constitutional amendment to cap property taxes. The Ball State survey found 64 percent support property tax caps to be amended in the state's constitution. And it has support of voters in every region of the state, with strong support in the extreme northern and southern counties.

Gov. Mitch and I are committed to taxpayer protection. My focus in January and throughout session will be to work with legislators to make the property tax caps part of the state's constitution. With shrinking revenues, I will also be working to ensure that proposed legislation does not cause an additional fiscal impact on our state.

Hoosiers can keep up with the action by viewing live streaming video of both the Senate and House as well as committee hearings at [www.in.gov/legislative](http://www.in.gov/legislative).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Skillman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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